

WYCOMBE
CHASE
LEADERS
ENFIELD

THANKS to a scrambled goal by Geoff Anthony in the second half of Saturday's game at Dulwich Hamlet, Wycombe Wanderers jumped back into second place in the Rothmans Isthmian League Division One.

With Hendon surprisingly losing at home to Kingstonian and both Enfield and Ilford involved in the London Senior Cup, the Blues took their opportunity of putting three more points in the bank at Champion Hill. This was no great victory — the conditions ruled that but before a ball was kicked — but to win at Dulwich is no mean feat. For the past two seasons, Wycombe have gone away with only a share of the spoils.

And so Wanderers are now hard on the heels of Enfield again and there must be a few people at Southbury Road who are looking anxiously over their shoulders. They won't need reminding how Wycombe caught them up in a dramatic finish to last year's championship which they won by a slender one tenth of a goal. At the moment the gap is only four points, although Enfield have a game in hand.

The hurricane winds that hit the weekend headlines had abated somewhat at Dulwich but there was still a swirling wind around the ground. The pitch too, made life difficult for the bounce was often uneven and only the most skilful players were able to find enough time to control and use the ball.

Fielding the side that beat Tooting last week, Wanderers began tentatively and were given little time or space to set up attacks. Hard working Dulwich looked more impressive early on, although they spoilt their moves by passing back into midfield, thereby losing all momentum.

Neither goalkeeper was seriously worried until the 18th minute when Trevor Bladon found himself a yard's space to shoot, the

Dulwich Hamlet 0, Wycombe Wanderers 1

ball taking a deflection and arching into the box. Little Peter Mills got up well but sent his header inches wide.

Wycombe looked strangely quiet in the first half hour and goalkeeper Kevin Everitt was allowed to make four clean catches without a semblance of a challenge.

The visitors had two half-chances before the break, the first of which arrived after 26 minutes when Howard Kennedy sent in a powerful half volley that raced past the static Everitt but also past the upright. It was snap shots like these that might have troubled Dulwich but finding shooting positions was not easy.

The second effort came from the head of John Delaney when he got underneath Tony Horseman's corner and sent the ball over the crossbar.

At half time, however, Wycombe must have been reasonably satisfied with the 0-0 scoreline, for they had faced the wind for 45 minutes and now had the elements in their favour. Dulwich were probably disappointed. They failed to use their advantage and although they looked promising at times, their build-ups were far too intricate and the Wycombe defence looked solidly in command.

If Dulwich had held the edge territorially in the first half, then Wycombe dominated the second. There was more confidence in their game and they gradually produced some useful breaks. Dylan Evans almost broke the deadlock after 49 minutes when he ran diagonally across the box and turned in a shot, but the ball was deflected past the upright.

Often, however, Wanderers were thwarted by the covering of Peter Smith, who acted as sweeper behind the Dulwich defence. Smith provided a steady last line of defence and often turned up at the last moment to rob the visitors of a scoring chance.

Everitt brilliantly plucked Anthony's cross out of the air after an hour's play and then Holifield drove wide after a fine one-two with Horseman. Wycombe's attacks spread from midfield where Terry Reardon, Kennedy and Holifield began to take a real grip in the second half.

The ball did not run kindly for Wanderers, however, and it was rather in keeping with the general standard of the game that the deciding goal should be a scrappy affair after 72 minutes.

Horseman looped over a corner into the six yard box where Everitt was challenged by Delaney and Dave Bullock. The keeper failed to reach the cross and in the scrimmage, Anthony got the vital touch to send the ball over the line.

Dulwich brought on John Boyle, the former Chelsea player, 10 minutes after the goal but he could make little impact on the game. Dulwich, in fact, looked a side lacking confidence. They have lost five of their last six matches at Champion Hill and after a fine start to the season, have begun sliding down the table.

The only danger to Wycombe was Alex Jackson, the leading Dulwich goalscorer, but apart from a couple of breaks, he was well shadowed by Paul Birdseye. John Maskell saved well from a Bladon header with five minutes remaining but Wanderers held out comfortably for their three points.

DULWICH: K. Everitt, S. Rogers, P. Smith, R. Brookes, B. Went, T. Bladon, D. Barker (sub J. Boyle 82 mins), P. Mills, F. Pudney, C. Pooley, A. Jackson.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell, P. Birdseye, K. Mead, J. Delaney, D. Bullock, H. Kennedy, T. Reardon, M. Holifield, D. Evans, A. Horseman, G. Anthony (sub D. Alexander 85 mins).

Referee: A. D. Cox.

Half-time: 0-0. **Goalscorer,** Wycombe — Anthony (72).